

CHILD CARE SECTION

2003-2005 UPDATE

REPORT FROM THE CHILD CARE SECTION (CCS)

BUREAU OF WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

2003-2005 BIENNIAL BUDGET

In 2003, Governor Jim Doyle signed a Wisconsin biennial budget that dealt with an historic \$3.2 billion deficit. The \$635.7 million provided for child care for the two years of the 2003-2005 biennium represented a reduction from prior year funding, but maintained the emphasis on fully funding the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program. Key funding approved for quality improvement included:

- \$2.7 million per year for the child care scholarship and bonus program
- \$2.5 million per year for community child care initiatives grants matched by local government
- \$4.5 million per year for child care licensing
- \$3.7 million per year for Head Start supplemental funding
- \$1.2 million per year for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- \$2.5 million per year for Early Childhood Excellence

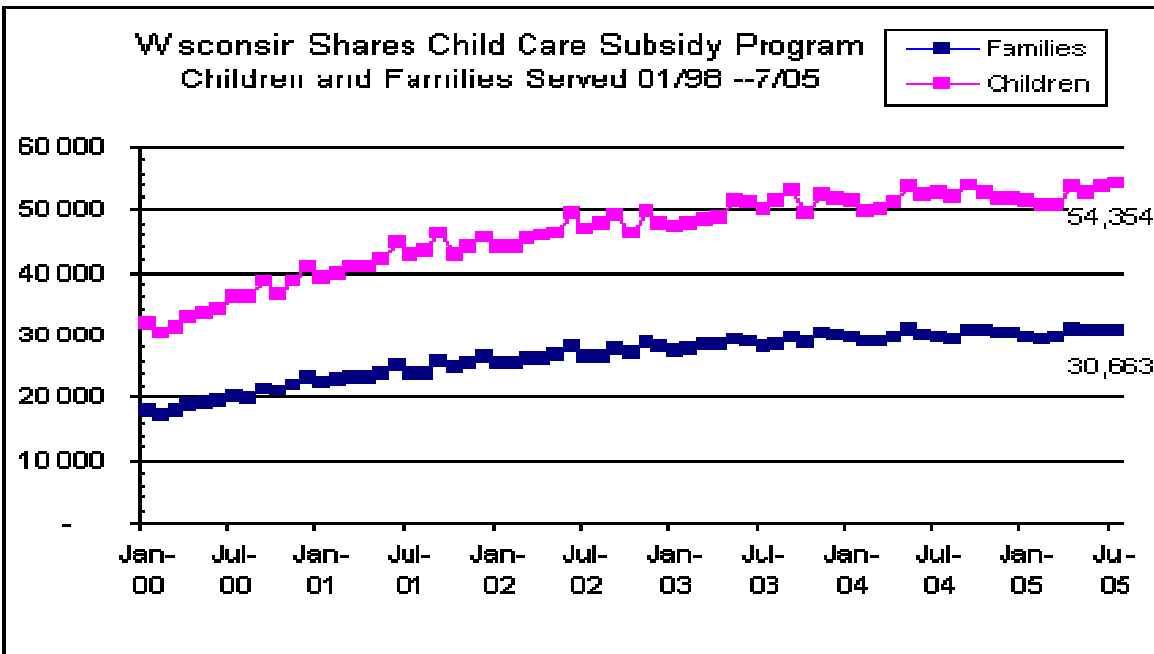
The chart below shows the history of funding for key child care budget items in the Department of Workforce Development's budget.

CHANGES IN WISCONSIN'S CHILD CARE BUDGET DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT 1986 – 2005

<u>Budget item</u>	1986-87 Before W-2	1995-1996 W-2 Begins	2002-03	2003-2004	2004-2005
Direct services to families: child care subsidies	\$13 million	\$56 million	\$306 million	\$289.6 million	\$308 million
Indirect services: increasing the quality and supply of child care	\$0	\$4 million	\$39 million	\$14.5 million	\$14.6 million
Total	\$13 million	\$ 60 million	\$345 million	\$313.1 million	\$322.6 million

WISCONSIN SHARES, THE CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program had shown a steady increase in participation over the past several years but has also shown a leveling off more recently. Since Calendar Year 2000, the number of children served has increased 54.1 percent. However, in 2004, the monthly number of children served increased from 51,313 to 51,839, an increase of only one percent. The following charts and tables portray this trend of continuing increases:



1. Summary Child Care Subsidy Statistics Using Calendar Year 2004 Data

	Calendar Year 2004	Calendar Year 2000	% Change
Total Payments	\$288,961,629	\$187,517,869	+ 54.1%
Children Served*	87,609	64,104	+ 36.7%
Families Served	49,980	35,759	+ 39.8%
Average Paid per Child	\$3,298	\$2,925	+ 12.8%
Provider Locations Receiving Payments	8,847	7,698	+ 14.9%

*Unduplicated Count

2. Subsidy Program Data

Milwaukee and Balance of State Comparison – Calendar Year 2004

	Milwaukee County (% of State Total)	Balance of State (% of State Total)
Total Subsidy Payments	\$157,841,008 (54.6%)	\$131,120,621 (45.4%)
Children Served*	39,506 (45.1%)	48,103 (54.9%)
Families Served	20,508 (41%)	29,472 (59%)
Average Paid per Child	\$3,995	\$2,726
Number of Provider Locations Receiving Payments	2,668 (30.2%)	6,179 (69.8%)

*Unduplicated Count

3. Provider Locations Receiving Subsidy Payments – Calendar Year 2004

	Licensed Group	Licensed Family	Regular Certified	Provisional Certified	Other*	Total
Number of Locations Paid	1,934 (21.9%)	2,661 (30.1%)	2,977 (33.6%)	1,015 (11.5%)	260 (2.9%)	8,847 (100%)
Total Payments	\$186.9m (64.7%)	\$62.7m (21.7%)	\$30.5m (10.6%)	\$4.0m (1.4%)	\$4.9m (1.7%)	\$289m (100%)
Children Served**	53,816 (61.4%)	17,696 (20.2%)	11,596 (13.2%)	2,105 (2.4%)	2,396 (2.7%)	87,609 (100%)

* "Other" includes Certified School Age Programs, In-Home Care, and Unregulated

** Unduplicated Count

4. Other Subsidy Program Statistics of Interest

The Child Care Section's Wisconsin Shares web site offers a series of statistical reports which are updated on a regular basis and which cover a broad spectrum of information related to the subsidy program. Following are a few data pieces from those reports (data from second quarter of 2005):

- Over 65% of the children served by the subsidy program are under 6 years of age. Close to 50% are between the ages of 2 and 6.
- Families served by the Wisconsin Shares program tend to be small in size:
 - 36% = two-person families
 - 32% = three-person families
 - 18% = four-person families
- On average, Wisconsin Shares covers over 90% of the cost of child care for served families.
- 90% of the served families are single-parent families.
- 82% of the families have a monthly income under \$2000.
- 49% of the families have incomes under 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.

For more detailed statistical data on the subsidy program, visit the Wisconsin Shares web site - <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dws/programs/childcare/wishares/default.htm>

5. Child Care Provider Certification (CCPC) Automation

Child Care Provider Certification (CCPC) is a web-based system and automates the application process and ongoing data maintenance functions associated with the certification of family day care providers. This system also feeds regulatory information about certified programs into the Child Care Subsidy System. The system was completed in May 2003. The DWD Training and Child Care Sections conducted hands-on trainings in all 7 DWD regions. About 150 certifiers were trained during the summer of 2003. The certifiers were given access after they had completed the training event.

This database is a practical tool for certifying agencies that previously tracked the certification processes manually. Certifiers have also used the many features of the system to help with their daily work and give certifying agencies and state agencies access to data on all certified providers in the state. The system is able to generate statistical reports on providers as well as generate mailing labels to all certified programs.

6. Data Sharing Grant

In 2002, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) was awarded a three-year Child Care "Data Capacity" grant by the federal Department of Health and Human Services' Child Care Bureau. The grant, titled the Child Care Data Sharing grant, was targeted toward building a Child Care Provider File (CCPF) containing information about all regulated (licensed and certified) child care providers in the State of Wisconsin.

The first phase of the Child Care Data Sharing grant became a reality in October 2004 when the two regulatory databases were merged into one Child Care Provider File (CCPF). CCPF provides a link for passing information about licensed providers from the Department of Health and Family Services' Bureau of Regulation and Licensing's automated system (CLIC), to CSAW.

With the inclusion of CLIC information in CSAW, all data on regulated providers now originates with the agencies having regulatory authority over child care providers, i.e., DWD certification and DHFS licensing. All new and changed provider information will originate in Child Care Provider Certification (CCPC) system and CLIC and will then be updated in CSAW. County and tribal child care subsidy staff will not be able to update information that is auto populated from CCPC or CLIC. This information has to be updated in CCPC or CLIC.

CCS and its partners have completed the groundwork to include the Registry ("Wisconsin's Recognition System for the Childhood Care and Education Profession"), NACCRRAware (the automated system supporting Wisconsin's Child Care Resource and Referral agencies), DPI's Food Program and perhaps other child care systems. The NACCRRAware interface will go into production in late 2005, followed by the Registry interface.

7. Training and Support Offered to Local Subsidy Agencies

Between 7/1/03 and 6/30/05, the Child Care Section offered three certification policy training sessions and 54 certifiers attended. These certification policy training sessions are followed with hands-on training in CCPC. Forty-three (43) certifiers attended the CCPC trainings.

8. Child Care List Serves

The DWD Child Care Section created an e-mail list serve in order to improve information flow from the state to the local agencies. The list serve includes subscription lists for people interested in certification, subsidy, child care council and day care manual updates. The sign-up page is at: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dws/programs/childcare/arrow/listserv.htm>.

9. Annual Market Rate Survey

The annual rate survey is required by federal regulations and state administrative rule and is used to establish a level of maximum reimbursement rates for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program for each county/tribe.

In the past, the counties/tribes conducted the survey and calculated the local maximum rates for the subsidy program. The results were sent in paper format to the DWD Child Care Section. In order to explore various rate structures (regional rates, etc.), the Child Care Section decided to e-mail Excel spread sheets containing all licensed programs for the county and have the agencies report the survey results in an electronic format. This way, simulations of various rate structures can be done very easily because all survey data can be dumped into one database.

10. Better Customer Service Offered through New Technology and Use of the Web

Through the use of technology and the web, the Child Care Section (CCS) has been able to provide greater customer service to child care providers regarding the payments they receive through Wisconsin Shares, the child care subsidy program. Once providers obtain security access to the Child Care Provider Information web site, they are able to view authorization, payment and demographic information for their center/home day care. Providers are also able to view state and regional announcements as well as frequently asked questions/answers regarding child care subsidy policy.

In April 2002, providers were able to enter attendance directly into the Child Care Payment System (CCPS) through the CCPI web site. Currently providers must complete and return a paper Attendance Report form to the local child care agency. Attendance must be entered into CCPS before providers can receive payment.

CCS is continuing to look at ways to provide better customer service to families who receive Wisconsin Shares by using technology and the web site to facilitate the attendance reporting process by providers and the case processing requirements by local agencies.

11. Mainframe Systems Move to the Web

The Child Care Statewide Administration on the Web (CSAW) system replaced the Child Care Payment System (CCPS), the mainframe system by which county workers and child care providers entered authorization and attendance data.

CSAW was built in 3 phases over 2003-2005. The last phase of the system was implemented on July 11, 2005. CSAW is a web system that replaced the mainframe system CCPS. The Child Care Section gathered feedback from local agency staff with each rollout and made recommended changes to the system in order to make it more user-friendly. Workers commented that they appreciated the new system and the modifications that were made.

During the same period of time, the CARES clearance and application mainframe screens received a web front end. The web system is called CARES Worker Web (C W W). CWW is currently being rolled out in phases and all counties should be using CWW by the end of 2005.

PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF CHILD CARE

1. Child Care Scholarship and Bonus Program

The Child Care Scholarship and Bonus initiative was funded at \$2.7 million in 2004-2005. The program includes T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN, and R.E.W.A.R.D.™ WISCONSIN. Below is information on services provided.

- **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN**

4,047 Scholarships have been awarded to 2,691 recipients since the inception of the Scholarship Program (August 1999).

1,204 new Scholarships have been awarded during the 2004-2005 biennium.

Scholarship Program to Date (August 1999 – July 2005):

Model	Scholarships Awarded	Percentage Breakdown of Scholarships
Early Childhood Associate Degree	1225	31%
Infant Toddler Credential	903	22%
Administrator's Credential	741	18%
6-8 Credit	440	11%
Mentor	392	10%
Bachelor's Degree	263	6%
Apprenticeship	83	2%
Total:	4047	100%

	Number of Participating Institutions
University of Wisconsin Campuses	16
Private Colleges/Universities	10
Technical Colleges	16

T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Recipients Ethnicity



2%	Identify themselves as American Indian
1%	Identify themselves as Asian/Pacific islander
5%	Identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino/Latina
19%	Identify themselves as Black/African American
4%	Identify themselves as Multiracial or No Response
69%	Identify themselves as White/European-American

There are scholarship recipients in **ALL 72 Wisconsin Counties**.
 Scholarship Recipients have **enrolled in over 40,500 credits** at Wisconsin Higher Education Institutions.

Grade Point Average of Scholarship Recipients: **3.7**

Turnover Rate of T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Recipients: **Less than 10 percent**

(National Turnover Rate of the child care workforce: 31%)

Number of Wisconsin children served by T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship recipients: **51,000**

808 Child Care Centers in Wisconsin **participate** in the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program.

The **average tenure** of a scholarship recipient in their **current child care program** is **over four years**.

Regulation Type of Sponsoring Programs:	
Licensed Group	52%
Licensed Family	35%
Certified Family	11%
Legally Exempt	2%

• **R.E.W.A.R.D.™ WISCONSIN**

The R.E.W.A.R.D.™ WISCONSIN stipend program was offered one time during the 2004-2005 biennium. Applications for the R.E.W.A.R.D.™ WISCONSIN stipend program were due on or before July 29, 2005. Stipends were awarded in September 2005. R.E.W.A.R.D.™ WISCONSIN 2005 stipends were mailed on Friday, September 9, 2005 to 2,379 family day care providers, teachers and directors who work directly with children. Stipend recipients received a stipend dollar amount between \$200 and \$900 based on the level of education that they have completed. Over \$1.4 million dollars was awarded for this eligibility period.

Registry Level	Equivalent Education	Amount of Stipend	Number of Stipend Recipients
3	Administrator's Credential, Apprenticeship	\$200	205
4	One year diploma, 32 credits	\$300	293
5	Associate Degree	\$500	645
6	Associate Degree plus a Credential	\$600	81
7	Bachelor Degree	\$800	924
8, 9, 10	Bachelor Degree plus a Credential, Masters Degree, Doctorate	\$900	231
Total			2379

- Recipients averaged over 8 years of employment at the current center in which they work.
- Recipients averaged over 15 years of employment in the early care and education field.
- Recipients live in 70 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.
- Recipients care for a combined total of over 70,000 Wisconsin children.
- 30 percent of the R.E.W.A.R.D. stipend recipients have received T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN scholarships to complete credit-based early childhood education.
- Since the last stipend round was awarded in 2003, 15 percent of the current R.E.W.A.R.D. stipend recipients have moved up one level or more on the Registry Career Ladder.

2. Early Childhood Excellence Initiative

When Wisconsin launched the Early Childhood Excellence Initiative in 1999, the concept was to develop and replicate state-of-the-art early learning centers by providing innovative high quality programming to enhance the physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and language development of children from low-income families. The resulting grant program provided funds to 18 grantees with 24 child care sites, which provide environments rich in visual, auditory, tactile, and other sensory experiences, which are guided by brain development with an emphasis on positive interactions with consistent caregivers. Grantees were required to use 10 percent of their grant funds for parent education and 15 percent for training for community child care providers. There was also an evaluation component.

In 2003-2005, these enhanced programs provided care for approximately 2000 children per year. Of the 24 child care sites funded, 22 have achieved or retained accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children

(NAEYC) or meet Head Start High Performance Standards. The remaining 2 programs are in the process of meeting accreditation requirements.

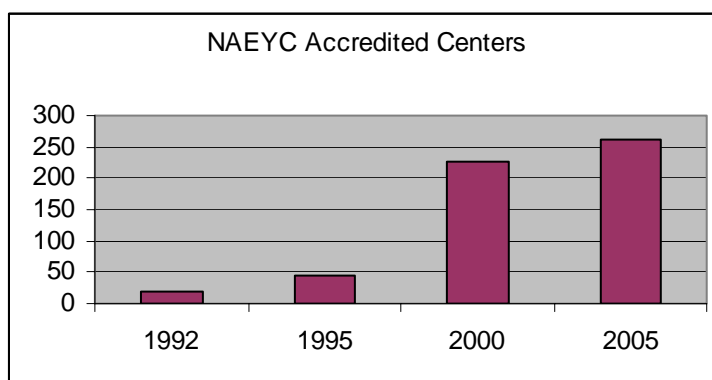
An evaluation report completed in 2003-2005 showed that grantees showed significant improvement in classroom quality, the quality of caregiver interaction, and caregivers' beliefs about children following the initial 15 months of intervention. It also demonstrated that quality of care among the 24 child care sites was higher than quality of care in randomly selected comparison centers. Results of classroom observations conducted in 2004 showed that the 24 Centers for Excellence continued to maintain higher quality than the comparison centers even after 3 years of significantly lower funding than the initial 15-month period.

Research and more detailed information can be found at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/ece/>.

3. Number of Accredited Child Care Programs Continues to Grow

Under the Early Childhood Excellence program, CCS awarded \$500,000 in each year to 153 accredited child care centers and 39 accredited family child care providers. In 2004, there were 177 recipients; in 2005, there were 192 recipients. Funds were awarded to accredited programs in 41 counties serving low income children and were intended to allow providers to pursue various aspects of quality emphasized in the Early Childhood Excellence program. Accreditation grants funded staff raises and bonuses, benefits such as retirement plans and health insurance, program consultation, staff training, supplies, and equipment.

The number of accredited group child care centers continues to grow in Wisconsin. The following chart displays the growth in accredited centers in Wisconsin. In 1992, there were 20 National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited child care centers in Wisconsin. By the middle of 2005, there were 261 centers accredited in Wisconsin. There were also 29 family child care programs accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).



T.E.A.C.H. scholarships continue to provide programs with opportunities for meeting the staff training requirements of accreditation.

4. Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Support Parents and Providers

In 2004 Wisconsin's 16 Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R):

- Provided child care referrals or consultation to the families of 20,145 children.
- Held 7,983 training events for 16,609 child care providers and teachers.
- Provided technical assistance to 40,591 child care providers,
- Provided technical assistance to 92,407 community members.

The 16 community-based member agencies of the Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral Network provided a broad range of training and technical assistance services to persons interested in working the field of early care and education and to those who own or who are establishing businesses in the field. The CCR&R agencies are accredited and meet and maintain significantly high standards of operation in all aspects of service delivery.

Under contract with DWD, the CCR&R agencies offered child care resource development and support services. Specifically, the CCR&R agencies:

- continually monitored the supply and demand for regulated child care in their service delivery areas;
- planned for the development of child care resources based on the need for child care,
- provided accurate information to potential child care providers about the licensing and certification processes;
- offered information and technical assistance to existing and potential child care providers, including but not limited to offering information about potential funding sources and business resources;
- networked with an array of community agencies in building the supply of child care resources;
- assessed child care provider training needs and offered resources to help meet training needs;
- provided information to child care programs about child care program accreditation and about caring for children with special needs; and,
- provided services and/or communication procedures representative of the ethnic, cultural, and language needs of the service area.

5. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network Accomplishments

CCR&Rs worked with the CCRR Network to launch several important projects and efforts of the Wisconsin CCR&R Network and its sixteen member agencies.

- **Think Big. Start Small. Campaign.** This is a highly successful public outreach campaign created to increase awareness of the importance of high quality early care and education for all children. Since the launch of the campaign in 2001, more than 1.6 million printed pieces have been distributed and over 58 million impressions have been achieved through TV, radio, and outdoors.
- **Quality Indicators Project.** As a precursor to statewide implementation of a parent education initiative defining the indicators of high quality child care, CCR&Rs in Wisconsin developed a set of criteria to identify quality indicators.
- **Governor Doyle's KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids Task Force.** Three CCR&R directors were appointed to and served on Governor Doyle's KidsFirst Quality Counts for Kids Task Force in 2004. This task force led to the proposed Quality Counts for Quality Kids initiative in the Governor's biennial budget proposal. Although not enacted by the Legislature, this important work has laid the foundation for future development of systems designed to improve the quality of early care and education and to support parents in their vital roles in that system.
- **Trust for Early Education (TEE) Community Planning for 4-Year-Old Kindergarten.** In 2004, with a grant from the Trust for Early Education through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin CCR&R agencies provided leadership in building vital communication links between child care and school systems in local communities preparing for 4-year-old kindergarten. CCR&Rs successfully reached out to over 1,000 early care and education practitioners to build communication linkages.
- **Leadership in the locally matched Community Child Care Initiatives Grant (CCCIG) Program.** CCR&Rs across the state continued to play local leadership roles in the CCCIG program. CCR&R's convened local stakeholders to develop projects focused on early education and care. Examples of efforts supported included: building the quality, health and safety of child care through training, education, and support; development of sub pool programs for child care providers; offering benefit programs for child care providers; and supporting public education around the importance of early education and care.

6. Community Child Care Initiatives Grant Program

\$2.5 million in grants were awarded annually to local governments in 2003-2005 to support local child care initiatives. Grants were awarded:

- To 52 grantees covering 111 jurisdictions in 61 counties.

- Grantees included 20 county Human/Social Services Departments, 14 Technical Colleges, 11 school districts, 3 American Indian Tribes, 3 county extensions and health departments, and one municipality.
- Most proposals were the result of collaborative planning.
- Most proposals were focused on improving the quality of child care services through strategies such as professional development, specialized technical assistance and support for providers, and program enrichment strategies.

7. Child Care Information Center

The Child Care Information Center was not included in the State's 2003-2005 budget, but the Child Care Section extended the FFY 2002/03 grant through March 2004. On March 19, 2004, the Joint Committee on Finance approved DWD's proposal to use \$133,300 of Child Care Development Block Grant funds to resume contracting with DPI for services provided by CCIC through September 30, 2005.

Customer Service:

CCIC filled 9,982 requests for information in this biennium, including 3,273 questions answered or referred. A request might be for a single item, for hundreds each of many different items, or for scheduling the loan of many educational videos over the weeks of a technical college course. While some questions are very simple, for complex questions CCIC staff does extensive research and creates customized learning packets with videos, books, articles, brochures, and contacts for more information.

Distribution:

At the request of DHFS' Wisconsin Immunization Program, CCIC distributed its Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Alert to approximately 10,000 people in CCIC Newsletter 48.

At the request of DHFS child care licensing staff, and to support changes in the Licensing Rules, CCIC assembled and distributed to providers and trainers packets of information on: emergency procedures, universal precautions, positive guidance, Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Distributed *Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards* (WMELS), a booklet published in October 2003. In November 2003 began charging for quantities of 25 or more. Distributed free WMELS posters and bookmarks. Loaned out 4 WMELS trainer's kits and 4 WMELS assessment kits to approved trainers all over the state, with CCIC paying the shipping both ways.

Shipped to Wisconsin Family Child Care Association, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, and Child Care Resource & Referral agencies 495 *Jo Jo's Circus Twist and Turn Time Activity Kits* donated to State Child Care Coordinators by the Disney Channel. Each kit included a video and game props to engage children in movement activities.

Mailed DPI's booklet *What's Right for Young Children: Improving the Childcare Nutrition Environment* to all licensed child care centers.

Publications:

Five issues of the *CCIC Newsletter* were published and mailed to approximately 10,000 child care centers and other interested parties:

- 45. *Better Business Practices*
- 46. *Naps and Bedtime Routines*
- 47. *Nutrition* (DPI's Team Nutrition contributed much of the content. Added to the newsletter with this issue a regular children's book bibliography by the Cooperative Children's Book Center.)
- 48. *Playful Math*
- 49. *Coping with Change* (Added to the newsletter with this issue a regular column on *Business Help* by the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation.)

Added to CCIC web site:

- Annotated bibliography *Recommended Books on Child Guidance and Discipline*
- Article *Love At First Bite* by Lorna Aaronson
- 2004 and 2005 conference calendars
- DHFS new *Family Child Care Policy Sample*
- Items required by March 1, 2005 revisions to Licensing Rules
- Revised version of *I'll Be Back for You: Making Separation Easier*
- Revision of *Together Children Grow: Quality Child Care for Children with Special Needs*

Acquisitions:

Acquired additional videos in Spanish.

Acquired additional videos and other materials on Shaken Baby Syndrome to support DHFS-required training in entry level child care courses and center orientation sessions.

Other assistance:

CCIC took over paying to duplicate the Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project video *Family Child Care Licensing: Starting a New Business* which for many years CCIC has shipped to the 1000 people per year who are helped through the licensing process by WCCIP.

Spent a \$10,000 inclusive child care grant from DPI on revising and printing the booklet *Together Children Grow: Quality Child Care for Children with Special Needs* and on purchasing *Never Shake a Baby*, a brochure on Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Publicized the DHFS publication *Got Dirt?: A 5 a Day Garden Toolkit for Implementing Community, Childcare and School Gardens* and related trainings in the CCIC Newsletter and on CCIC's web calendar.

8. Support for Child Care Licensing

A total of \$8.9 million in Child Care and Development Fund dollars were used in 2003-2005 to fund 90.45 positions in the Bureau of Regulation and Licensing in the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS). The funds were transferred to DHFS from DWD. The positions

funded were primarily licensing specialists needed to administer the state licensing program for over 5,300 child care programs statewide. Primary licensing functions include on-site inspections, complaint investigation, enforcement action, and assistance with new licensing applicants.

9. Support for Head Start

During 2003-2005, DWD transferred \$3.5 million per year in TANF dollars to DPI to supplement federal Head Start dollars. When combined with GPR appropriated to DPI for the same purpose, there was an additional \$7.2 million per year to add slots to Head Start programs.

10. Collaboration Efforts

The Child Care Section continues to be a partner in numerous collaborative endeavors. Progress continues to take place in developing a system of blended programs that are accessible and supported by a well trained workforce to create systems of quality programs for young children and their families. Collaborative work has moved systems planning forward with other state agencies, the Governor's Office, Head Start, Wisconsin Technical College System, Child Care Resource and Referral Network, and many other groups:

- **Progress Towards Creating a Coordinated System of Professional Development.** The Professional Development Initiative (PDI) is a framework in place to support the goal of a coordinated system for Professional Development. This collaborative effort supported within the PDI framework provides opportunity for workgroups to further plan and promote:

- Planning/organizing cross system training,
 - Development of a coordinated training and technical system,
 - Shared outcomes and collaborative planning.

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Care and Education Career Guide (www.collaboratingpartners.com) is currently under review and additions and enhancements are being completed within the framework of PDI.

- **Launched Standards Comparison.** Development of collaborative programs has created the need and interest in developing a comparison of standards required by the various programs including Head Start, DHFS Licensing, NAEYC Accreditation, DPI, and health and safety standards. This comparison is being developed through resources from the CCS, DHFS, and the Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project. This comparison is available for review on the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners webpage: http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/eEd_care.htm and is a useful tool as programs develop community collaborations to serve young children.
- **Regional Network Formed.** Staff from several state agencies joined together to support the development of Regional Networks. These networks offered the opportunity for programs to create new approaches that support young children and their families, enhance cross program and department efforts at the state and local

levels, and facilitate communication between local, state, and regional levels. State staff met with each of the 5 regional groups during the biennium and continue to support the development of these networks through resources and consultation. In addition state agencies utilizing multiple streams of funding have supported the creation of Community Collaboration Coaches. These contracted positions have provided regional support to communities to establish community approaches to early care and education opportunities. Additionally, these positions have provided Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards contact points to disseminate information and coordinate training opportunities across disciplines.

- **Participated in Collaborations to Create Higher Quality Programs for Young Children.** In addition to the above accomplishments, the Child Care Section continues to participate in many groups dedicated to creating higher quality programs for young children in Wisconsin. These groups include:
 - **The Head Start State Collaboration Project Advisory Committee** that focuses on partnerships between Head Start and other early childhood programs.
 - **A Department of Public Instruction PI34 Work Group.** A change in the DPI licensing rules necessitated the development of the PI34 Work Group. This work group developed a plan to include child care and other early childhood programs in the new licensing system and created a system of mentoring and ongoing professional development that allows teachers outside the school system to attain a license.
 - **The Department of Public Instruction has led the effort to establish Community Approaches for 4-Year-Olds.** The Forces for Fours workgroup provided opportunity for sharing and dissemination of resources and materials that support community based opportunities. Communities are identified as interested, exploring or utilizing community based approaches to serving four-year-olds. Materials have been created to support communities in blending funding, to support collaborations that identify collaborative visions. Community Collaboration Coaches were available to help build public awareness, share in the development of planning and delivery models, understand program standards, personnel needs and staffing patterns, and brainstorm transportation issues. Further information on Community Planning and 4K approaches is available at: http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/eEd_care.htm
 - **The Brain Team.** This collaborative of state agencies and organizations invested in actively promoting optimal childhood experiences to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities through the dissemination of brain development research.
 - **The Birth to 3 Coordinating Council.** This Council brings together parents, services providers, state agency representatives, and citizens to coordinate and plan for services to young children with disabilities and their families.
 - **Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education.** Wisconsin was selected as a Strengthening Families Initiative pilot. It was led by the Children's Trust Fund, although the full state leadership team includes about 40 members including DWD. The CSSP Strengthening Families Initiative fits well with new directions that we are taking as a state in both child abuse and neglect prevention

and improved outcomes for child maltreatment prevention through early care and education programs.

11. Research Efforts

During 2003-2005, the University of Wisconsin-Extension, the CCRR Network, and the Child Care Section collaborated on a research project funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services' Child Care Bureau.

The project had three objectives:

1. To use administrative data from DWD's child care data warehouse to describe the demographic, geographic, and composition characteristics of the population of children, families, and child care providers who accessed state child care subsidies in Wisconsin.
2. To compare the structural quality of state-subsidized child care with the quality of child care for other licensed programs in the state.
3. To use observational, interview, and questionnaire measures to assess the state's record for supporting high quality child care for children in families that did and did not receive subsidies.

Data sets and Publications were developed by the Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership (WCCRP); these documents and Brief and to the Point Issue Briefs #1 through #16 are posted on the WCCRP website: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/wccrp/>

12. Development of a Quality Rating System

As part of Governor Doyle's **KidsFirst** Plan to Invest in Wisconsin's Future, the Child Care Section led the effort to develop a Quality Rating System for child care providers.

Task Force

- The *KidsFirst*. Quality Counts for Kids Task Force, composed of representatives from 21 public and private organizations and agencies, met seven times between June 2004 and November 2004.
- The Task Force examined a wide range of quality ratings and tiered reimbursement options, and was guided by national research and the experiences faced by other states when developing a quality rating system.
- Three Public Hearings were held in October 2004 to receive comments on the *KidsFirst*. Quality Counts for Kids Task Force recommendations. Comments were also received directly by the Department of Workforce Development, Child Care Section.

Research Findings

- The set of quality indicators produced by the Task Force were traced to research on both structural and process variables that constitute quality care.
- University of Wisconsin – Extension’s research findings on quality child care, particularly as it relates to low-income children, provided the framework for creating indicators of quality which might be collected efficiently statewide. It was envisioned that these indicators would be easily understood and recognized by consumers, and would be valid from a provider perspective.

Quality Rating System Recommendation

The Quality Counts for Kids Task Force agreed unanimously to recommend a Quality Rating system with the following features:

- The system includes all regulated center-based and family child care programs (licensed and certified providers).
- The system provides a five-star scale similar to ratings given in other consumer areas (restaurants, hotels, etc.), using child care quality indicators to determine the number of stars.
- The scale is built on a foundation of child care regulation, based on Wisconsin’s strong set of licensing and certification standards. All regulated programs receive a minimum of one star; in order to obtain 2 or more stars, programs need to meet the criteria for regulatory compliance (see definition).
- Star levels 2-5 are awarded based on the total number of points earned from a 30-point quality indicator system.

Quality Rating System Description

The Task Force recommended two comparable Quality Rating approaches that fit the two major forms of child care: licensed group child care centers and licensed and/or certified family child care. The Task Force tried to make the two approaches as consistent as possible, while recognizing the differences in these settings.

- Licensed child care centers earn points from quality indicators in four categories:
 - Teacher qualifications
 - Director qualifications
 - Learning environment and curriculum
 - Professional practices
- Licensed or certified family child care programs earn points from quality indicators in three categories:
 - Provider/director qualifications
 - Learning environment and curriculum
 - Professional practices

Tiered Reimbursement Structure Recommendation

The Quality Counts for Kids Task Force reviewed a range of options for tying a child care provider's payments under the child care subsidy to the quality of care provided. A guiding principle was that the state should attempt to set reimbursement rates so that it "gets what it pays for" in terms of child care quality. It did not seem appropriate for child care programs of widely varying quality to receive the same levels of reimbursement through the subsidy program. Once the Task Force completed its recommendation for the Quality Rating System, it made recommendations on where the base (current payment levels) should be set and estimated the relative amount of differential that should be set between star levels. The Task Force recommended the following approach:

5 star	+25%
4 star	+10%
3 star	no change
2 star	- 5%
1 star	- 30%

Inclusion in Governor's 2005-2007 Biennial Budget Request

The Task Force recommendations were included in the Governor's Biennial Budget Request but were eliminated by the Legislature. However, the products resulting from the Task Force work remain a valuable resource for promoting the growth of quality child care in Wisconsin.

Additional detail is located at: <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=1736&locid=19>.